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Perceptions of Sources of Pressure and Reasons for Dismissals of Mississippi High School Head Coaches

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The University of Southern Mississippi

PERCEPTIONS OF SOURCES OF PRESSURE AND REASONS FOR
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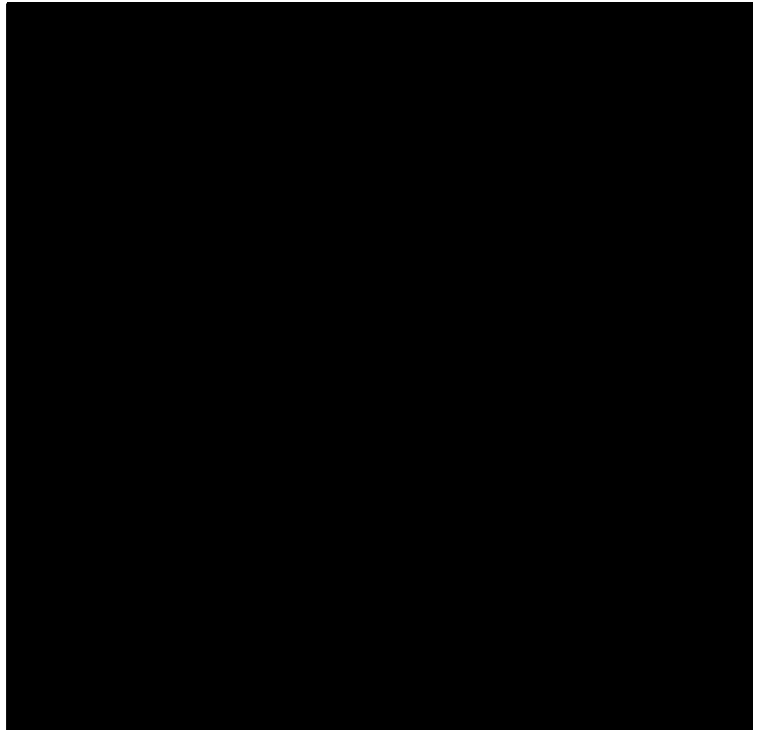
by

Michael Keith Pigott

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Studies Office
of The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Approved:



May 2008

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The University of Southern Mississippi

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Abstract of a Dissertation
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ABSTRACT

PERCEPTIONS OF SOURCES OF PRESSURE AND REASONS FOR
DISMISSALS OF MISSISSIPPI HIGH SCHOOL HEAD COACHES

by Michael Keith Pigott

May 2008

The coaching profession is like a roller coaster ride. A person pays to get on the ride, sacrifices their life, enjoys the highs, and survives the lows. It is a job filled with long hours, stressful days, sacrifices of health and family, and moments of adrenaline rushes that make an individual want to stay in this profession forever.

The primary focus of this study was to identify the perceived sources of pressure on high school head coaches in the state of Mississippi. This study provides feedback regarding reasons for coaching dismissals and perceived sources of pressure. Two hundred and thirty four principals, 233 head football, 207 baseball, 197 softball, and 391 boys / girls basketball coaches employed in the state of Mississippi were utilized for the study.

The study found that principals and coaches agreed on the top five perceived sources of pressure: coach themselves, parents, team sports, fans, and teaching. The significantly different perceived sources of pressure were individual sports, administration, family, and the media. Perceived sources of pressure between coaches of female sports and coaches of male sports were in agreement for the top six sources: coach themselves, parents, team sports, fans, teaching, and administration. The significantly

different perceived sources of pressure were individual sports and parents. There was no significant difference found with perceived sources of pressure between years of experience of coaches.

Principals stated that improper conduct was the main reason for dismissing coaches, followed by failure to motivate players, and the coach / player relationship. Coaches stated that failure to win was the main reason for dismissals, followed by coach / administrator relationship, and improper conduct. Both principals and coaches ranked teaching performance as the least likely reason for dismissing a coach.

Whether it is playing within the rules, teaching techniques, producing a competitive team, or being a positive role model, coaches want respect from their peers, administrators, and community. Administrators and head coaches need to communicate the roles and expectations of the athletic program to ease the sources of pressure and set a common standard for reasons for dismissals.

I am able to do what I do because of sacrifices of others. Anytime I get the urge to pat myself on the back for something, I think about what the members of my family did to give me a chance at a better life. Every time you see a successful person, you should think about the people in that individual's life who made sacrifices for their success.

Lou Holtz
Wins, Losses, & Lessons

DEDICATION

The author would like to dedicate this project to several individuals. First, to his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Mike Pigott, who have supported the author and sacrificed their entire life to give him every opportunity to accomplish his dreams. Second, the author would like to dedicate this project to his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Rex Pigott and Mr. and Mrs. Vennon Craft, for their encouragement, inspiration, love, and wisdom over the years. Finally, the author would like to dedicate this work to all high school coaches across the state of Mississippi who have sacrificed their time, health, money, and family for the betterment of the coaching profession. The positive influence, guidance, and values that are instilled in all the student - athletes lives you come in contact with each year is priceless. In closing, the author would like to send this message to all coaches at any level across the nation: Lou Holtz (2006) once said “Coaching gives one a chance to be successful as well as significant. The difference between the two is when you die, your success comes to an end. When you are significant, you continue to help others be successful long after you are gone” (p. 5). COACHES KEEP TEACHING, KEEP COACHING, KEEP INFLUENCING, AND KEEP BEING SIGNIFICANT!!!!!!!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank several individuals who played important roles in the completion of this work.

First, the author would like thank long time head football coach at Southern Miss, Jeff Bower, for his support of this project. The letter you included in my survey mail-out helped encourage coaches to respond to my questionnaire. Also, the integrity, loyalty, and commitment to excellence that you represent daily provide a great example for young coaches to follow. Finally, providing me with the opportunity to be the defensive graduate assistant and with the chance to coach college football is something myself and my family will always be grateful for.

To his committee, the author wishes to express his appreciation to Dr. Nancy Speed, who has provided great leadership, extreme patience, and constant support throughout this process. Also, Dr. Dennis Phillips, Dr. Susan Hubble Burchell, and Dr. Gary Krebs must be recognized for their input, time, and guidance during the completion of this project. Finally, without the statistical expertise of Dr. J. T. Johnson the project would have never been completed. Each one of your efforts will never be forgotten.

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To one of my best friends, Jason May for opening up your home for a year and giving the author assurance and confidence to go back to school to pursue this degree.

To Dr. Donald Lackey, for establishing a foundation of this body of knowledge to improve the coaching profession and for supporting and assisting a total stranger through this journey.

To my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, for blessing me with such a wonderful life. The opportunities and positive role models that have crossed my path over the last 31 years is a testament to your favor surrounding me each day.

Finally, "...He who walks with the wise grow wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm" (Proverbs 13:20).

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

What do Bubba Davis, Nevil Barr, Steve Jones, Ricky Woods, Debbie Triplett, and Walter Denton have in common? They are all successful high school coaches in the state of Mississippi. Each is a household name in their respective communities and under tremendous pressure to maintain a standard of excellence in their athletic programs each year. As the popularity of sport increases and the community's investment in their local high school grows, coaches' job responsibilities and expectations are magnified.

As Mike Krzyzewski, Duke Head Basketball coach, said, "The coaching, I love. The kids, I love. It's the other stuff you have to watch out for" (Aberman & Anderson, 2006, p. 6). Coaches can handle the preparation and teaching of the game because they understand what to expect. The other duties (fundraising, public relations, dealing with parents, teaching class, and much more) are issues coaches are sometimes unprepared to address. Coaches are scrutinized and are under a microscope to handle many problems not related to the game. These other problems may cause coaches to reflect on whether or not all the personal sacrifices they make to coach young athletes are worth it.

In the coaching profession, there is no clock, no calendar, and no vacation. It is a business that makes one question their self worth because coaches are judged by a scoreboard (Lackey, 1994). Job security is decided by teenagers' athletic abilities, public opinion, wins, and losses. Coaching is one of the few occupations where job performance is consistently on display for others to criticize openly (LeUnes & Nation, 1996). The public takes advantage of this opportunity to criticize no matter the setting.

The bleachers, the workplace, and the community are all popular places for critics to voice their opinions. They criticize with no regard for the people around them.

Sometimes even the coach's family becomes victim of this public display of scrutiny. As a result, pressure in high school sports is increasing daily (Miller, Lutz, Shim, Fredenburg, & Miller, 2005).

The role of high school coaches is one with many hats to wear. Coaching, teaching class, washing uniforms, cutting grass, raising money, and being a positive parent figure are just a few (Chelladivya & Kuga, 1996). All these fill a coach's schedule on a daily basis. With so many job responsibilities, managing time to prevent the job from becoming all-consuming is difficult (Aberman & Anderson, 2006). This profession is a seductive mistress that can give a person great joy and tremendous heartache.

To the majority of the public, a coach's life is a dream. Getting to be a part of sports, media exposure, and all the other perks that go along with the job are all most people see. The truth is, however, a high school coach's life is filled with fifteen hour days, little pay, health risk, and loss of family time. Coaches feel that the sacrifice of personal time and neglect of their health during the season is necessary for the success of their program. With all the good and bad associated with the coaching profession, there are still millions of people coaching across the nation (Burgess & Masterson, 2006)

Job security in the coaching profession is a rarity. Pressure to win and fulfilling multiple duties are difficult tasks for one person. Being well - rounded and effective in many areas are criteria for successful coaches to possess. Administrators look for these qualities when it is time to evaluate a high school coach (Gratto, 1983). Wins and losses

are the obvious job evaluation but is it the greatest concern of administrators?

Relationship with athletes / administration, public relations, classroom performance, conduct, and budgeting are all points of consideration in the evaluation process.

Accountability in each of these areas is required and expected for survival in this profession.

The athletic director is ultimately responsible for evaluating the performance of a coach. Although one would think this responsibility would be a simple process, it is filled with a variety of influences. Players, parents, media, students, school board members, and the community are all contributors to the evaluation process.

Unfortunately, with so many opinions, it is difficult to make a clear judgment and satisfy everyone (Jubenville, 1999).

Coaches often think they know the reasons behind being dismissed. The human mind has a way of seeing things as it desires. Unfortunately, with so many factors contributing to dismissals, coaches might not truly know what led to being fired. In today's extremely competitive athletic environment, pressure on high school coaches to be skilled in so many areas is prevalent. Unrealistic expectations are sometimes placed on these individuals to take a program to a higher level of success. Because pressures are increasing, recognizing and communicating expectations has to be a priority of all the involved parties (Miller et al., 2006).

Although there are many roles to play in the coaching profession, a team's record determines how much pressure is ultimately placed on a coaching staff. Phil Jackson, NBA Head Coach, once said: "Winning covers up a multitude of sins while losing makes

mountains out of molehills” (Jackson & Rosen, 2002, p. 21). This advice could be the best a high school coach could ever get to survive in this profession.

Problem Statement

The primary focus of this study was to identify the perceived sources of pressure on high school head coaches in the state of Mississippi. This study provides feedback regarding reasons for coaching dismissals, sources of pressure, and the amount of pressure felt in this profession. Two hundred and thirty four principals, 233 head football, 207 baseball, 197 softball, and 391 boys / girls basketball coaches employed in the state of Mississippi were utilized for the study, which was conducted in the fall of 2007.

The specific purpose of this study was to determine:

1. Perceived sources of pressure on high school coaches in Mississippi.
2. The difference(s) in perceived sources of pressure that exist between coaches of male and female sports.
3. Perceived reasons for dismissals of high school coaches in Mississippi.
4. If high school coaches differ on perceived sources of pressure based on years of experience.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at the .05 alpha level of significance ($p \leq .05$). It was hypothesized that:

1. There will be no significant difference between rating sources of pressure with high school coaches and principals.

2. There will be no significant difference between rating sources of pressure of high school coaches between male and female sports.
3. There will be no significant difference between rating sources of pressure of high school coaches by years of experience among coaches.

Research Questions

1. What are the sources of pressure on high school head coaches in Mississippi?
2. What are the reasons for dismissals for high school head coaches in Mississippi?

Definitions of Terms

Classification: Group or class of schools based on enrollment

According to the Mississippi High School Activities Association (2007), schools are classified by:

- 5A: any school during the year 2007 – 2008 in Mississippi with attendance over 1104 for grades 8 – 11
- 4A: any school during the year 2007 – 2008 in Mississippi with attendance between 1103 -556 for grades 8 – 11.
- 3A: any school during the year 2007 – 2008 in Mississippi with attendance between 555 – 370 for grades 8 – 11.
- 2A: any school during the year 2007 – 2008 in Mississippi with attendance between 369 – 218 for grades 8 – 11.
- 1A: any school during the year 2007 – 2008 in Mississippi with attendance between 217 – 29 for grades 8 – 11 (personal communication, June 2007).

Head Coach: an employee who teaches and trains athletes while coordinating their efforts within a particular sport (Terry, 1984).

Evaluation: to examine and judge concerning the worth, quality, significance, amount, degree, or condition of (Webster's Dictionary, 1998).

Athletic Director: an employee who is responsible for recommending the hiring, firing, evaluating, and the overall quality of an athletic program.

Delimitations

The study was delimited to the following:

1. The population included principals and high school head football, baseball, softball, and boys / girls basketball coaches from all public schools in the state of Mississippi.
2. A coaching questionnaire designed by Dr. Donald Lackey, professor at the University of Nebraska at Kearney, was used. It focuses on classification, sources of pressure, and reasons for dismissals (See Appendix A).

Assumptions

One assumption was made in using the coaching questionnaire:

1. All principals and high school head coaches who completed the questionnaire were honest in their responses.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is that high school coaches and administrators will recognize the sources of pressures placed on coaches. With this information, coaches and administrators will be able to understand some of the problems that lead to dismissals and can eliminate or curtail those problems. Literature on this topic is limited at the high school level so increasing knowledge will help allow everyone involved to make better decisions.

The high school coach will be given information to help them reflect on improving issues not related to on the field performance. Universities that offer coaching

curricula can improve the workload and focus of assignments in their classes. Stressing the importance of communication skills, dealing with high expectations, knowing yourself, budget pressures, and the sacrifices involved can help prepare students for the coaching world. Proper undergraduate preparation can improve the overall quality of coaches and give them a head start on the reality of the job (Lackey & Scantling, 2005). Administrators will recognize proper evaluation techniques and the importance of communication with high school coaches.

Lou Holtz (2006) stated, "Coaching is the type of profession where you buy your houses based solely on how fast you can resell them when you are fired" (p. 60). Knowing what to expect from parents, the community, administration and other sources of pressure can help coaching longevity. Ultimately, the athlete will benefit from an improved, well rounded coaching staff.

CHAPTER II

Review of Related Literature

Introduction

The review of literature focuses on five main areas: the role of a coach, causes of stress, evaluation procedures, case law, and previous studies.

The Role of the Coach

Many authors, including Pensgaard and Roberts (2002), Bloom, Stevens, and Wickwire (2003), Gilbert and Trudel (2004), and Nash and Collins (2006), have identified factors that affect the role of a coach. Pensgaard and Roberts described the main focus of a coach is creating a productive team atmosphere. Bloom, Stevens, and Wickwire argued cohesion and team building activities are the most important role of a coach. Gilbert and Trudel explained the main role of a coach is to guide an athlete in life and in their chosen sport.

Assisting athletes to reach their full potential is a difficult but very rewarding job. Nash and Collins (2006) explained, "Effective coaching is a mixture of pedagogy, sociology, and physiology, often referred to as the science of coaching" (p. 465). Head coaches of team and individual sports are challenged to create an environment and develop relationships where athletes are inspired to improve daily.

Philosophy

According to Webster's Dictionary (1998), philosophy is defined as a set of ideas or beliefs relating to a particular field or activity. It is the foundation of every decision a

coach makes. It impacts every decision, thought, and action a coach makes concerning their team. Parsh (2007) explained that all coaches have offensive and defensive philosophies for their sport but struggle with a philosophy for handling an overall program. Dealing with discipline, parents, decision making strategies, budget concerns, and many other issues are part of the job assignment. Having a well thought out plan to deal with these issues is necessary for overall success.

Lumpkin and Cuneen (2001) stated, "An individual's personal and work related values and beliefs are usually compatible with each other" (p. 40). Therefore, it is important that coaches examine and demonstrate proper values in everyday life. Experience also plays a role in determining a coaching philosophy (Lumpkin, 1998). Individuals develop and mature through a life filled with influences from their environment. These influences can shape and change a coach's philosophy over time.

Lumpkin and Cuneen (2001) concluded that there are four questions a coach must ask him/her self when determining an overall philosophy. The first question is, what is the basis for my values? Understanding our actions and their cause is important for determining values. Lickona (1991) described family, friends, media, religion, and socioeconomic status as being major influences for behavior. These influences of behavior may become sources of pressure during stressful situations.

The second question is, what do I value in sport? Becoming a coach involves a great deal of responsibility on and off the field (Rudd & Stoll, 1998). Placing value in building a competitive program and producing productive citizens is more rewarding than basing success on a yearly record. Teaching proper behaviors – respect, discipline,

honesty, work ethic – that have a lifetime influence on players should help improve an individual's quality of life after sport (Lumpkin & Cuneen, 2001).

The third question is, do I value the rules of sport? Actions prove the amount of value placed on the rules of a sport. Playing eligible athletes, using proper equipment, maintaining proper sportsmanship, and displaying integrity with commitments are examples of opportunities for coaches to act in a proper manner (Lumpkin & Cuneen, 2001).

The fourth question is, how do my values affect others? Valuing parents, players, administration, the community, opponents, and other coaches shows a mutual respect for everyone involved in the overall success of a program (Lumpkin & Cuneen, 2001). Teaching players to honor their opponent and treat them with respect can improve the competitive spirit of a team. Phil Jackson, NBA head coach, said it best, "No opponent is garbage. Have a warrior mentality where you honor your opponent because they make you a better warrior" (Jackson & Rosen, 2004, p. 73).

Teacher / Coach Conflict

Most high school athletic teams have coaches who have dual roles: classroom teacher and coach. Coaches are usually hired to teach and paid additionally for any coaching assignments. Dual responsibilities of teaching and coaching have become a given way of life for high schools across America. Since this is considered the "norm" among high schools, role conflict is a major problem (Sage, 1990).

Defined by Sage (1987), role conflict is "the experience of role stress and role strain due to the conflicting multiple demands of teaching and coaching". Locke and Massengale (1978) suggest that role conflict is predictable in that the role responsibilities

attached to each position may lead the individual to make a larger commitment to one role over another. Massengale (1981) described this conflict as “role retreatism”.

Climbing the occupational ladder in either role can require the teacher / coach to make a larger commitment to that role, devoting more energy to it at the expense of the other role.

The criteria to be successful as a coach or teacher correlate with each other.

Effective teaching requires preparation through knowledge and experience. Both require organization of practice and classroom activities to maximize student learning. Both deal with advising students and being positive role models in the community. Upgrading methods and reaching a variety of learning styles to help students is another role of both teaching and coaching. Finally, increasing a knowledge base through clinics and meetings helps keep teachers and coaches up to date with current information (J. Drummond, personal communication, Spring, 2001).

Harden (1999) focused on teaching attributes of expert coaches who have dual roles as a teacher and coach. Expert coaches, who met certain criteria, were interviewed and observed, formally and informally. Each coach had a minimum of five years of coaching experience and a 70% win / loss record. An unknown number of subjects were observed on three occasions. He reported four differences when comparing the teaching and coaching environment. These four differences are: planning, instruction, support, and recognition.

Planning is a strategy used to accomplish goals. Harden (1999) found that most coaches plan more in depth and detailed lessons for practice than for their classroom. Coaches tend to have minute by minute schedules for athletic practice and update those

schedules yearly. In contrast, coaches rarely update lesson plans for their classroom and consistently use plans from years past.

Instruction is communicated information for how an action is to be executed. Harden (1999) found that coaches spent a large amount of time instructing athletes during practice on improving skill development, fitness levels, and strategies for success during competition. Classroom instruction consisted of mostly game play with little skill development. Most coaches blamed lack of class time for not teaching skills and rules of games. Student/teacher ratio is another problem associated with differences in teaching and coaching. Classroom teachers average thirty students per class. At practice, coaches usually deal with eight to twelve players each depending on the position. This has been an issue for the education system for years. Teacher/coaches believe they receive more support from the school, administrators, and community for their coaching job rather than teaching a class. Getting parent support for athletic teams was much easier than physical education classes.

Recognition for a quality job is another problem. Harden (1999) recognized coaches as being known in their community for the product they produce on a playing field and the program they run every year. The community tends to overlook their classroom performance. If coaches prepare their team properly and succeed in competition, the community praises their work. If coaches prepare their classrooms for a test and get quality results, no one usually acknowledges the job. Harden highlighted the major concerns and differences listed above of the teacher / coach role. Understanding these differences can assist administrators with supporting their coaching staffs.

Several alternatives have been suggested to address the role conflict of teacher/coach (J. Drummond, personal communication, Spring, 2001). Drummond made several recommendations for assisting this problem: Make job security determined by educational standards, move athletics out of school, make a coach's teaching load lighter during the season, train undergraduate students to cope with problems, reduce the pressure to win and increase effective teaching accountability, and encourage collaboration among coaches and administrators to confront this role problem. Appendix B is a list of questions to help coaches determine if they are becoming too one – sided as a teacher / coach (J. Drummond, personal communication, Spring, 2001).

Teacher/coaches have the greatest potential to influence a child's educational experience. Being effective in both roles is a main reason for this positive experience. Holtz (2006) listed three areas of mastery to be a good teacher: 1) know your subject, 2) present the subject in an interesting way for others to understand, and 3) be enthused for teaching. Coaches can apply these same areas to their athletic environment. It is extremely important for teacher/coaches to understand where they stand when reaching students and be open to learn new ways to improve their gift of being a teacher.

Coach / Athlete Relationship

The relationship between a coach and his/her players is special and evolves over the years. It usually begins with the coach as an authority figure and progresses into a partnership. Jowett (2003) stated that the coaching profession is like the progression of an athlete. Coaches are at different stages in developing their skills and improve with experience just like athletes. Respect for and towards each other as a coach and athlete help build a powerful partnership.

High school coaches usually have a close personal relationship with their players. Jowett (2005) argued that the reasons for this are because of a coach's responsibility for the athlete both on and off the field. Smith and Smoll (1996) best described this personal relationship by stating athletes trust their coaches for advice for dealing with problems more than their parents. Martens (1987) suggested communication, early in the relationship, helps build trust that is the foundation for a great relationship.

According to several authors, coaches play many roles within one job title. Jowett and Cockerill (2003) stated that a coach is an advisor and counselor. Effective coaches establish a personal relationship with their players and resolve problems, teach proper conduct, and guide players through their anxieties. Weiss and Smith (2002) argued a coach's most important role is to be a friend, mentor, and supporter. Showing athletes that they are more valuable than just their performance on the field helps establish this relationship. Discussing problems, sharing success, confiding in each other, and supporting the athlete through rough times in their life are ways this role is displayed. Creating an environment that is safe, both physically and socially, allows the athlete to open up and accept this type of coach – athlete relationship.

A coaching staff that remains intact at one school helps in building relationships with the athletes, their families, and the community. Jowett and Chaundy (2004) stated that a coach is an assessor, demonstrator, and instructor. They focused on the importance of instructing athletes in the skills of their sport, proper demonstration of the necessary skills, and the ability to assess the athlete's performance of the skill. Maintaining a coaching staff for multiple years allows athletes to gain confidence and understanding of a coach's teaching methods and abilities.

Howe (1990) discussed the importance of instilling in each athlete a sense of satisfaction because of participation in athletics. Each athlete is different and wants to be treated in a unique way. Carron (1982) argued that coaches are expected to be a fountain of knowledge on different subjects and a motivator to each athlete. Athletes want to know about training, nutrition, dealing with injuries, and topics unrelated to sports. Athletes expect a coach to have the answers. Being creative in motivating athletes year - round helps maintain satisfaction because coaches really know their athletes and what it takes to get the best from each of them.

All coaches do not coach alike and all athletes cannot be treated alike. Understanding the pros and cons of different coaching styles helps improve the connection of the coach – athlete relationship. As athletes grow and gain experience, they need to be dealt with differently.

Officer and Rosenfield (1985) revealed the importance of a coach as a substitute parent when athletes are young. Guiding, nurturing, and supporting young athletes fill the athletes need for a father/mother figure. A coach gets involved in the background and personal lives of players. It is a relationship based on more than just what an athlete does on the field. This style usually does not work when parents and coaches battle for control of an athlete or the athlete is older and independent.

The coach as a manager is a more businesslike coach–athlete relationship. The coach still monitors the daily lives of his/her athletes but expects respect rather than love in return. Dorsel (1989) focused on this type of relationship as being goal-oriented, where athletes are ready to perform at a higher level, and works well when the athlete is emotionally stable and accepts the coach's authority.

Coaching is more than just a job. It is a twenty-four hour a day profession, where thoughts of improving and helping individuals never leave the mind. It is unlike any other profession because so much is invested in committing to others (Nancy Speed, personal communication, June 10, 2007). The coach/athlete relationship is special, where success depends on mutual respect, committing to each other, and supporting through the good and bad times throughout a career.

Stress on Coaches

According to Lee and Phillips (2006), stress is defined as an expectation placed on the body and the body's reaction to it. Stress is experienced by everyone and is a part of life that cannot be avoided. Whether stress is caused from work demands or the satisfaction of reaching a goal, it is a constant pressure in our world. Coaches will agree that the most challenging part of their job is dealing with the stress from so many directions. Young coaches struggle with dealing with the pressures and amount of time sacrificed in this profession. The relationships established by coaches with parents, administrators, athletes, and the community can be very encouraging or very frustrating (Barton & Stewart, 2003).

Sources of Stress

Adult behavior at many sporting events is out of control. Verbal and physical abuse is seen throughout athletics across the country every year. Images of adult behavior leave lasting impressions on athletes, coaches, and communities. Gehring (2001) describes this problem as a "supercharged environment where the mix of adrenaline and competitiveness can push behavior out of bounds" (p. 6). Martin, Dale, and Jackson (2001) identified a few horror stories: a softball coach is threatened to be

killed over a child's playing time, a coach is stabbed after practice, and a soccer dad punches a coach after a game. The list could go on and on. These types of events add unnecessary stress to coaches.

The Oprah Winfrey Show (2006) produced an episode on this growing problem across America. She had two guests who were ridiculous with their kids and coaches. The first guest was a dad who wanted his son to play in the National Football League. The child trained six days a week with a personal trainer, saw a chiropractor after every game, and studied film like he was preparing for the Super Bowl. The high school coach was under tremendous stress from the parent to improve the child's skills and prepare him for college football.

The second guest was an out of control mom who wanted her daughter to be a national champion in cheerleading. She attended every practice and every competition to judge the child's performance and coach's ability to improve her skills. She constantly gave corrections and was never satisfied with the child or the coach's work ethic (Winfrey, 2006).

Winfrey's (2006) audience members had opinions on the reasons for parents being out of control. One man admitted he was a fanatic with his children during games. Both children played football and he wanted them to be the best at the game and blamed the coach if they did not meet his expectations. He described his methods and enthusiasm to be like Michael Jackson's father. He stated that Mr. Jackson was hard on his kids but all are rich and very successful. Winfrey responded in disbelief that success in life was viewed by the amount of money a person makes. Unfortunately, this is our society and the view of millions of over-zealous parents.

Conn and Docheff (2004) analyzed six reasons for negative behaviors by parents in the athletic environment. The first was living vicariously through the child. Parents attempt to make the dreams they had for themselves come true in their children. Parents see more ability in their children and place increased pressure on them daily. The second reason is having visions of superstardom. Many parents hope their child becomes the next great professional athlete. Anyone or anything that gets in the way of their child's "superstar status" can cause problems.

The third reason is the chance to secure a college scholarship. The thought of college is an unreachable goal in the minds of many people. Sports can make a tremendous difference in that mindset. The cost of college is a tremendous burden on families and a scholarship will help solve that problem (Conn & Docheff, 2004). The fourth reason is family values. Many parents see athletic achievement as mirroring their standing in a community. They place value and their worth on the performance of their children.

The fifth reason is professional athletes as role models. Michael Vick, Barry Bonds, and Pac Man Jones are examples of athletes with inappropriate behavior and speculation. Professional athletes' behaviors have tremendous influence in America. Parents with these negative behaviors usually support inappropriate actions and reactions by these role models.

The sixth reason is a win-at-all-cost attitude. With this attitude, athletes lose chances to develop their skills, enjoy participation, and grow as an individual. Parents struggle with their child losing and take their frustrations out on the coach. Keeping the

game in perspective so the student athlete fulfills their needs is difficult at times for parents and coaches (Conn & Docheff, 2004).

Barton and Stewart (2003) focused on the influence of parental involvement and relationships with coaches. They found that an under-involved parent establishes an isolated relationship with the coach and communication is affected. Lack of support by the parent sometimes allows athletes to not be committed to their team and coach. The over involved parent places stress on a coach. A parent that is constantly present at practice and games with an influential voice can create a negative environment (Barton & Stewart).

In Kahill Gibran's (1978, p. 17 - 18) poem, she writes: "Your children are not your children. They are the sons and daughters of life's longing for itself. They come through you but not from you, and though they are with you, yet they belong not to you. You may give them your love but not your thoughts, for they have their own thoughts. You may house their bodies but not their souls, for their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams. You may strive to be like them, but seek not to make them like you." Barton and Stewart (2003) stated coaching is a profession where stress is expected and parents cause the majority of that stress. Coaches and parents need to work to understand each others goals and create a relationship with trust and communication which can help reduce this stress.

Internet message boards are another source of pressure on coaches. The Mississippi Sport Talk website, hsmississippi.scout.com, is a place for fans, parents, coaches, and anyone else interested in Mississippi high school athletics to learn about players. It is also a site where individuals can post messages and discuss coaches,

players, teams, and problems with athletics. Certain topics that are consistently on this site are: Who is the best coach / team in certain counties? What is the problem with certain schools and their athletic programs? Can assistant coaches really coach? Why can't coaches discipline athletes? Trash talk between rivals is also popular. These sites are entertaining but can also raise the question: Do coaches feel any stress or pressure from these sites?

Dealing with administration is another source of stress on a coach. The more administrators know about sports, the more likely they are to support the needs of their coaching staff. Hoch (1998) believed that most administrators understand the importance of athletics and want to help make their sport environment a positive experience for everyone involved.

How is an administrator educated on the pressures of coaching? Henry (1975) stated that communication was the best way to help administrators understand this level of stress. Updating them on new ideas, promoting and sharing honors, and reporting parental complaints and problems from games, and sharing philosophies and goals for the athlete can help the administrator feel a part of the overall program.

Financial cutbacks are placing increased pressure on coaches to spend wisely and raise money from different sources. Long, Thibault, and Wolfe (2004) focused on coaches competing for finances from high pressured and low pressured sports. Funding is a serious problem that has placed coaches in a position to generate funds from businesses and the community. It also forces them to cutback on equipment and clothing for players and teaching tools for drills.

Turk (2000) discussed schools using corporate America to help with financial constraints. Athletic departments are dealing with serious interest from major companies like Coca Cola and Nike. This relationship benefits the companies with exposure of their product. These companies provide their products and the athletic program gets quality equipment and refreshments at a discounted price.

Inglis (1991) described the problem among athletic departments dealing with high and low priority sports. Administrators have to use the money generating sports - football, basketball, and baseball - to help finance the low income sports – tennis, golf, swimming, etc - at all schools. Unfortunately, the money generating sports suffer from lack of full funding. Increasing knowledge of this problem can help administrators and coaches have a better functioning athletic department. Schneider (1997) agreed with the need for improving the high and low money sport relationships because financial uncertainty will remain for athletic departments.

Hoch (1998) described four ways to help administrators understand a coach's mindset in dealing with the coaching profession. The first is the importance for the administrator to see the contribution of athletics to the overall school identity. Coaches and athletes are usually more visible representatives of a school. People usually associate a school's overall quality with athletic program success. The second way is for the administrator to understand that all sports are equal. Even though high profile sports make the money and get the exposure, low profile sports provide students with the same learning experience.

The third way is for an administrator to judge success based on more than a team's record. Creating a competitive team, improving skill levels of all athletes,

establishing a tremendous work ethic, being good role models, developing public relations within the community, and satisfaction of participants in being a part of the team creates an overall evaluation of the coach. The fourth way deals with hiring quality coaches who want to coach. Hiring individuals who are excited, passionate, and dedicated to a sport will help improve the quality of the overall athletic department (Hoch, 1998).

Sacrifices and Cost

According to Gilbert (2004), the majority of coaching profession research has focused on coaching behaviors. To date, little is known of the main pressures in the coaching profession (Frey, 2007). Occupational stress is well identified in many professions that involve contact with people. Since coaching is a people oriented profession, those same stressors could apply. Coaches are in a constant position of satisfying demands from many areas. Frey identified physical hardship, loss of family life, losing passion for coaching, and constant frustration as main sources of stress. Malone (1984) identified salaries, lack of free time, coach–athlete relationships, and pressure to win as the main sources of stress. Unfortunately, dealing with the variety of stress and pressure on coaches requires them to sacrifice their lives in many areas (Frey).

Stress in the work environment is a major problem in our society. Balancing work and family is a struggling issue for many people. According to Smith (1986), rewards and benefits of coaching have to be compared to the sacrifices and cost of the job to determine if coaching is the right profession for an individual. Lee and Phillips (2006) compared two theories, Conflict and Expansionist, dealing with the problems of work and family. The Conflict theory suggests that success in any area of life requires great

sacrifice in another area. Work and life happiness suffer great consequence when conflict is present which dictates the majority of attention from an individual. Flexibility, the ability to take time off at work or home, helps ease the consequences of these role conflicts (Lee & Phillips). Unfortunately, the coaching profession, especially during the season, does not give much flexibility to a coach's life.

The Expansionist theory promotes that multiple roles within a person's life may benefit them more than cause problems. The theory supports improved mental, physical, and relationship health. Employment and role quality lowers depression and improves attitudes. Freedom in the ability to choose methods for completing job assignments and independence in making decisions improves psychological well being. Energizing an individual, through opportunities to succeed and expansion of responsibility, can lower stress levels and give people a role identity (Lee & Phillips, 2006).

Health related problems are another source of sacrifice coaches make for their teams. Frey (2007) defined burnout as "a state of fatigue or frustration brought about by devotion to a cause, way of life, or relationship that failed to produce the expected reward" (p. 41). Burnout in high school coaches is found from stress in over committing to different areas, social support, stress to produce competitive teams, and other responsibilities associated with the coaching profession.

Burgess and Masterson (2006) listed several documented health related problems to National Football League coaches. These were: Mike Martz, former head coach of the St. Louis Rams, sitting out most of the season from health problems; Dan Reeves, former head coach of the Atlanta Falcons, missed two games because of quadruple bypass surgery; Ray Rhodes, defensive coordinator of Seattle Seahawks, suffered a stroke; Tom

Rossley, offensive coordinator of Green Bay Packers, suffered chest pains during a game and was rushed to the hospital. Knowledge of health problems of coaches at the high school level was not identified but an assumption is made that the same problems exist even though the game is at a lower level of competition.

George Ireland, former head college basketball coach, stated, "One day my doctor sat me down and asked if I wanted to keep coaching or die in two weeks" (Frey, 2007, p. 39). The coaching profession is not the only profession that requires long hours and sacrifice at an unthinkable level. The problem is that the long hours are done over the course of fifteen to twenty straight weeks without days off. It is very difficult to maintain this lifestyle and not have it affect personal health.

Financial gain is also a sacrifice made by individuals who want to coach high school sports. Most people believe coaching is a job with tremendous financial benefit. Unfortunately, these beliefs are only true in a very small percentage of the coaching profession. High school coaches are paid a stipend, an add-on to a teaching salary, ranging from \$500 for low priority sports to \$5,000 for high priority sports. When broken down hourly, coaches make pennies and nickels for the time invested in a high profile job (Burgess & Masterson, 2006).

The cost of hours spent away from family causes stress on a coach's family relationships. Booth, Johnston, White, and Edwards (1984) identified that jobs that required more than eight to ten hours a day led to an increase in the chance of a divorce. Korobov (1994) found that homes where the father is absent consistently leads to loneliness of the wife which affects the marriage. Fisher (1996) stated that more married couples live in different areas of the nation because of their profession than ever before.

A coach's lifestyle is paralleled with causes that lead to divorce. Fisher (1996) identified some of these causes as: pressure to produce a competitive team, possible relocation yearly, constant travel during the season, and investing more time in the job than in the marriage. Eitzen and Zinn (1991) found that the divorce rate is extremely high during the first seven years of a marriage. Aberman and Anderson (2006) stated: "Some young coaches decide to sacrifice everything for their career. Then they reach their mid-thirties and realize that they've never had a serious relationship and the clock is ticking down for starting a family" (p. 13). The causes identified by Fisher are the same stressors that are keys to a coach being successful. Unfortunately, the beginning of a career and a marriage usually start off at the same time. When comparing the causes for divorce along with keys to coaching success against the divorce rate within the first seven years, it is easy to relate these problems to each other.

Matejkovic (1983) surveyed high school football coaches' wives on their satisfaction with marriage. He found that as a coach's job responsibilities increase, especially during a season, there is increased dissatisfaction felt by the wife. The main areas of dissatisfaction were lack of companionship and overall feeling of disgust towards the sport. Head coaches' wives struggled more than assistant coaches' wives with happiness in their marriage. Some of the negative feelings focused on neglect, loneliness, and disruption in the family environment. Length of the season and stress on the coach were also negatively viewed by wives. Some comments were positive and focused on the wife feeling a part of the program, having fun, and understanding the importance of the job.

Matejkovic (1983) also included a section for the wives to express their attitudes about the coaching profession. Listed below are some of the negative quotes: "We love each other very much, but during football season, I am definitely low man on the totem pole." "From the time football begins in August until the last game, I feel like we live separate lives." "We've never enjoyed a fall in the years we've been together." Some more positive comments were also included: "I enjoy football almost as much as my husband and am happy to see him helping young men develop into responsible adults." "My husband is coaching because he loves it, therefore he is fulfilled, which in turn makes him easier to live with."

Coaches of high visibility sports are under constant pressure and struggle with separating work from home. Unlike classroom teachers, coaches are on public display virtually everyday. The competition between work and family adds to the pressure on coaches who have multiple roles to fill in their lives.

Conclusion of Sacrifices

Holtz (2006) implied every time you see a successful person, think about the sacrifices in that individual's life. How many teachers or administrators go the extra mile like a coach? How many kids does that coach save from making bad decisions? They do not give rings and recognition for that part of the job. Sylvester Croom (2007) stated: "The stress on a coach does not stay at work when it is time to go home. Our work never goes away. Constantly thinking, preparing, studying, and striving to accomplish a goal is always on our mind. It is so easy to get totally consumed in this profession." (Sylvester Croom, personal communication January 28, 2007). Coaching, at any level, is a high profile job. Whether in the National Football League or at a local high school, the

sacrifices coaches make to get the best from their athletes and improve their lives is undeniable.

Coping with Stress

Stress is normal physical reaction when individuals feel internal or external pressure in their lives. Stress limits your ability to make good decisions, damages physically, and places strain on functioning effectively. Balancing aspects of life - work, relationships, enjoyment, physical, and emotional, is not easy. People who reach this balance have a different mindset on life. They see life as tough preparation rather than a daily grind because they are in control.

Stress management helps individuals cope with events of daily life. Coaches are filled with daily requests, sometimes unreachable expectations, personal struggles, and a variety of other job related events to manage. Since managing stress is unique for everyone, experimenting and understanding what methods work best helps coaches deal with the grind of this profession.

Hoedaya and Anshel (2003) described coping with stress as a conscious attempt to decrease the strength and regular occurrences of stressors. Although there is literature on sources of pressure for coaches, coping processes in sports and the affect of their effectiveness is not well known. Gilbert (2004) found four studies that focused on coping methods of coaches from 1970 to 2001. Those studies focused on dealing with burnout, stress on new college coaches, correlation of stress and health on coaches, and stress on athletes from coaches. Much still remains unknown about the ways coaches deal with managing stress.

Frey (2007) studied college head coach's experiences with stress, their performances, and their methods for coping with the stress. Ten Division I head coaches were interviewed. Level of competition, success, experience, family, recruiting, and loss of free time were the main stressors. The majority of coaches felt the negative effect of stress on their health, well being and personality. The coaches struggled with managing stress because so much attention is on the results rather than the journey. A few ways described for their way of managing stress were: To have a steady unit of social support with family and friends, visualization to help calm nerves, being creative to add fun with the team at practice or meetings, exercise, or read.

Since limited information was available on coping methods of coaches, especially at the high school level, general stress management techniques were researched. Tudor and Bassett (2004) and Maibach (2003) identified taking care of the body as the best stress management. Getting enough sleep fuels the body and improves thinking. Regular exercise is a main component of reducing stress. Thirty minutes of aerobic exercise three to four times a week is recommended. A balanced diet is extremely important. Eating breakfast gets the system started in the mornings and several nutritious meals throughout the day will help with energy. Avoiding caffeine and alcohol are also obvious improved health choices. All of these recommendations are good for improved lifestyles. The problem is a coach's lifestyle can conflict some of these choices. Time constraints during the season and demands of the daily grind make accomplishing all these recommendations very difficult (Tudor & Bassett, 2004).

Another general stress managing technique that could help coaches is knowing personal limits. Understanding that every year will not be a great one is an important lesson for coaches. Maintaining a sense of humor helps keep the day in perspective. Trusting assistant coaches and other staff members allows a coach to give up control over some responsibilities during a day. Time management and not over committing a coach's schedule helps a coach accomplish responsibilities and not feel overwhelmed (Tudor & Bassett, 2004).

Evaluation

Effective coaching behavior involves a variety of characteristics that build a successful coaching career. The National Association for Sport and Physical Education (2006) has established eight domains that make up the characteristics needed for success in coaching. These domains are used to set the standard for coaching education programs.

Domain one is developing a coaching philosophy that describes behaviors expected and displayed by the coach. The benchmarks for this domain are to create an athlete centered philosophy, teach positive values, and exemplify ethical behavior. Jones (2004) explained that an athlete centered philosophy maximizes the benefits of participation for all athletes. She also stated that a coach should use this philosophy when making tough decisions that affect the team. Teaching positive values for success in life is a major impact of sports in children. Brian Billick (2001) described certain traits that coaches need to help make that impact. Having integrity, knowing what to stand for, and living by those standards can help teach children to take responsibility for their actions. Being honest and trustworthy gives athletes' belief in what a coach says in

situations. Being loyal proves that a coach will stand by his values, goals, staff, and players. Loyalty to each other can sustain a team through tough times. Jones recognized the responsibility of a coach's personal actions. Displaying ethical behavior in the community, making good decisions, and letting actions speak for themselves are positive coaching behaviors.

Domain two involves safety and injury prevention of athletes. The benchmarks are to recognize previous injuries, ensure clearance by a medical professional, and modify drills and practice to reduce injuries. Domain three involves teaching children proper nutrition and encouraging healthy workouts. The benchmarks are keeping athletes hydrated, being proactive in noticing eating disorders, and providing information on making good food choices.

Domain four involves promoting growth and leadership skills. Athletes learn responsibility for their actions, how to deal with conflicts, leadership skills, and mentoring younger players. Each of these aspects of growth help prepare athletes to be productive citizens later in life

Domain five is teaching communication techniques for success in life. Coaches should communicate a personal care for each player if they want the athlete to perform. Billick (2001) describes communication as the main component a coach needs to be effective as a leader. As a coach, understanding the game is very important but if there is a lack of communication with players, knowledge is useless. Communicating well with staff members, the community, and school employees is helpful when things need to be accomplished. Communication is the core of leading a team.

Domain six involves analyzing, planning, and scouting opponents for competition. Studying personnel, adjusting strategies, and creating game plans that maximize athletes abilities are skills needed to prepare a team for victory. Lou Holtz (2006) stated: "A coach must know their opponent and subject inside and out, be able to present what you know in a cohesive and interesting way, and have enthusiasm for teaching. To be a good coach, embrace these principles" (p. 29). Knowing the opponent, understanding their methods, and teaching this to a team leads to success on the field.

Domain seven involves being organized and prepared for all responsibilities associated with the athletic program. Conducting productive meetings, turning in paperwork, communicating policies, and developing plans for budget usage are important benchmarks. Skillful coaches understand that success is a by product of preparation, organization, and hard work.

Domain eight deals with public relations. Public relations are a major responsibility of a coach. Sharing the mission and values of the team with parents, students, and the community helps build support for the team. It also helps with fundraising and maintenance needs that require attention.

The impact of the characteristics involved in coaching is a major consideration in choosing the proper assessment for evaluations. An evaluation must have all the items associated with the job that are not on the field coaching related. If these items are not included, a coach's job security at the high school level will be based solely on win-loss record.

Importance of Evaluation

All administrators know the importance of evaluating coaches. The amount of work it takes to evaluate effectively can sometimes feel like an overwhelming process. Cardone (2006) stated that knowing what is to be accomplished, making sure the process is effective for all individuals involved, and leaving the coach motivated to improve their performance helps this responsibility. Jubenville (1999) argued that coaches are under strenuous pressure daily with increased public awareness of their coaching decisions. Accountability in the coaching profession is a necessity to survive.

The purpose of an evaluation is to assess performance in different areas, praise successes, and make adjustments for improving shortcomings. Some coaches view these evaluations negatively. They view these assessments as methods for dismissals rather than methods to promote improvement. Cardone (2006) listed reasons to help administrators clear this miscommunication: 1) recognize outstanding coaching, 2) promote the positives but work on areas of improvement, 3) help create a plan for improving, and 4) decide whether dismissal is needed.

Successful coaching involves more than the results on a scoreboard. All coaches play multiple roles, such as being a teacher, counselor, father/mother, disciplinarian, and motivator. Being a positive public figure, a trainer, and role model are just a few more roles. When evaluating a coach, all the roles have to be considered to give a proper evaluation.

What are the qualities of an effective coach? DeMarco and McCullick (1997) listed five characteristics needed to be considered an expert coach. The characteristics

were: specialized knowledge of the sport, properly evaluate player performance, be great problem solvers, have instinctive behaviors for instruction, and self evaluate for improvement (DeMarco & McCullick).

Gratto (1983) asked two questions: Who should decide the criteria for evaluation and who is doing the evaluation? Coaches, athletic directors, and principals should be included in the designing process of the evaluation tool used in each school. Sometimes these roles are played by the same person, as in a dual coach/athletic director position. There are two small schools in Mississippi where the principal is the athletic director. There are one hundred and thirty one schools where a surveyed head coach was also the athletic director.

The evaluation tool should be designed to represent qualities and values of each school. Cardone (2006) stated an evaluation should be based on school philosophies, competencies of successful coaches from the state board of education, and specific athletic department goals. The tool should also be efficient and meaningful to the individuals who are involved. Time management is important for administrators so creating a concise evaluation tool can help with this process. Allowing coaches to be involved in the designing process gives them confidence in what is expected and makes the evaluation meaningful to the individual.

Language within the evaluation tool must be provided in a proper way. Descriptors like satisfactory, outstanding, and needs improvement are often used in this process. Creating a proper understanding of the definitions of these descriptors is important for proper communication of the results of the evaluation (Cardone, 2006). Timing of the administration of the instrument is important as well. Mallett and Cote

(2006) stated evaluation should take place two times during the year: once at mid-season and once at the end of the year. The information gained from a mid-season evaluation allows a coach to know what is working well and improve issues of concern. The season ending evaluation is a summary of the entire year and truly deals with the issues that decide renewal or dismissal of a coach's contract.

Gilbert & Trudel (2005) promoted personal reflection for coaches to become as effective as they can in this profession. Experience and observing others in the profession are the main resources for coaches to learn from and improve yearly. It is recognized that years of experience does not produce a better coach but if a coach reflects on the season, good and bad, and makes the necessary adjustments, they have a better chance of becoming more effective. Reflecting on athletic behavior, team performance, organization, and parent issues are areas where coaches can learn what can be done better in their career.

As coaches grow in the coaching profession, the stages of learning change. When coaches are young with little experience, they actively seek materials, books, and advice on how to improve. Attending clinics, talking to other coaches, and constantly learning methods to view the game in a more productive way are habits of young coaches. They tend to stay in this stage of acquisition for a few years until they become confident in their knowledge and development. As years of experience increase, coaches evolve into the construction stage of learning. This stage consist of coaches improving schemes, techniques, and strategies for making their teams better (Gilbert & Trudel, 2005).

Mallett and Cote (2006) listed five guidelines for administrators to consider when dealing with evaluations. The first is to view the coach's behaviors over the season,

consider athlete's evaluations, and the overall performance of the team. The second is to officially evaluate a coach more than once before making decisions about renewal. The third is to use an adequate number of player evaluations. The fourth is to consider the problems like injuries and lack of resources the coach faced during the year. Finally, keep an open mind to the coach's explanations about the results of the year. Applying these guidelines can make administrator's job of determining if a coach is reaching the goals of the program easier and gives them proof for any decisions made dealing with the coach's future.

A formal evaluation of coaches is important for the betterment of the athletic program at the high school level. Improving the quality of coaches helps to improve the development of the athletes, which in turn improves the overall program. Involving coaches in the creation of the evaluation tool helps make the process valid and creates accountability for everyone.

Dismissal / Case Law

Termination of a licensed employee in Mississippi is described in the Mississippi code, Section 37 – 9 – 59: “For incompetence, neglect of duty, immoral conduct, intemperance, brutal treatment of a pupil or other good cause the superintendent of schools may dismiss or suspend any licensed employee in any school district. Before being so dismissed or suspended any licensed employee shall be notified of the charges against him and he shall be advised that he is entitled to a public hearing upon said charges. In the event the continued presence of said employee on school premises poses a potential threat or danger to the health, safety, or general welfare of the students, or, in

the discretion of the superintendent, may interfere with or cause a disruption of normal school operations, the superintendent may immediately release said employee of all duties pending a hearing if one is requested by the employee. In the event the licensed employee is immediately relieved of duties pending a hearing, as provided in this section, said employee shall be entitled to compensation for a period up to and including the date that the initial hearing is set by the school board, in the event that there is a request for such a hearing by the employee” (Mississippi Code, Section 37 – 9 – 59).

Supplemental contracts are for duties beyond the regular teaching assignments. These are contracts with precise responsibilities, payment, and time period of employment. They are different from base contracts and are not subject to the same conditions. Supplemental contracts are one year contracts with annual performance reviews and may or may not be renewed. Coaches are hired through these supplemental contracts. Since these contracts are separate from base teaching contracts, a teacher can be removed from a coaching position but remain a teacher in the school district (McCarthy, Cambron, & Thomas, 2004).

Case law is a body of judge – made law that sets regulations and precedence for future decisions in our society. Understanding case law can help coaches see where they stand legally when dealing with athletics and students. Suing coaches has become a regular occurrence in this profession. Even if all the basics are covered, like permission forms and physicals, a coach is still in danger if something unexpected goes wrong. In the case of *Tarlea v. Crabtree*, a high school football player died of a heat stroke during preseason conditioning camp. The coaches had the parents sign consent forms to

participate in football and the preseason camp. They had the player fully cleared to play with a physical given by a doctor, which happened to be the young man's uncle. The coaches followed the state rules by practicing without equipment during the first three days of camp. Instructing the players on proper hydration, diet, and rest was also covered and breaks were given frequently. The parents still sued the coaches for negligence even though they acted properly. The Circuit Court ruled in favor of the parents and the coaches appealed the decision. The Appellate Court reversed the decision concluding that the coaches did not act irresponsibly in their handling of the safety of the players (Lexus Nexus Legal Research, 2007).

Leahy v. Hernando County School District was a negligence case concerning a player who was not fully equipped and participated in an agility drill. The player was not issued a helmet because of lack of money to purchase enough equipment. On the second day of practice, the coaches wanted an agility drill that involved contact performed by the players. No special instructions were given for players without helmets. Leahy was the first player without a helmet to perform the drill. As he progressed through the drill his face collided with the helmet of another player. His front teeth were broken and facial injuries were suffered. Allowing the player to participate was enough to find the coaches negligent (Lexus Nexus Legal Research, 2007).

Smith and Gremer v. Urbana School District was a supplemental contract case involving the head football and baseball coach, one for twenty six years and the other for three years, at Urbana School District. The school wanted to renew their teaching contracts but non - renew their coaching contracts. The school board's opinion was that a

coaching change would be good for the program. The coaches claimed that the Fourteenth Amendment required the school board to give them a hearing because they were tenured as coaches. Unfortunately, the Fourteenth Amendment does not guarantee coaches a job. It only guarantees the right to know why they were dismissed. The courts found for the school because job tenure protects teachers not coaches (Lexus Nexus Legal Research, 2007).

Code v. Erlanger School District was a case involving entitlement to a formal evaluation. Code was a tenured teacher and head basketball coach at the same school for approximately twenty years. He was non-renewed as a coach because of discouraging athletes from playing other sports and disagreeing with the football staff on weightlifting philosophies. Required evaluations are only for teachers hired by school districts. The courts ruled for the school because formal evaluations for coaching assignments are not required to remove coaches from their positions (Lexus Nexus Legal Research, 2007).

Lagos v. Modesto School District was a non-renewal case where Lagos thought he had property and liberty rights in his coaching position. Lagos was the head baseball coach for eleven years and was orally promised the position as long as he performed satisfactorily. The courts ruled for the school because property rights are not protected for coaches (Lexus Nexus Legal Research, 2007).

Courts consider coaching an extracurricular position. Supplemental contracts allow coaches to continue teaching in the district even if their coaching duties have been removed. Acting responsibly, reducing the risks of injury, and properly planning and supervising practices can protect coaches from lawsuits and non-renewal of their contracts.

Previous Studies

The sports craze in America is at an all time high. Sports rule the nation, from small towns to major cities. Media exposure and increased community interest have increased the craze. There is no question that coaches have tremendous pressure in this profession. Pressures are both internally and externally placed on coaches. Dealing with these pressures causes coaches many burdens and lead to dismissal, either voluntarily or forcefully, from the profession. Helping coaches recognize these pressures and ultimate causes of dismissals can prepare coaches for a more positive experience.

Although little research has been done in this area, the knowledge recognizes the lack of communication between coaches and administrators. Garrison (1958) conducted a study in Arkansas to determine reason for coaching dismissal. Only 6% of administrators listed failure to win as the main reason for dismissal. A surprising 100% of the coaches interviewed rated failure to win as the leading cause for being fired. Johnson's (1962) study in Illinois identified outside pressure and students themselves as the main sources of pressure.

Lackey and Scantling (2005) have been the most consistent researchers in this area by surveying principals from the same population for the past four decades. They have distributed a questionnaire to public and private high school principals in Nebraska once every ten years. The results have added to the knowledge of what principals expect from head coaches. The 1970's study found that coaches were dismissed for these reasons: poor coach – player relationship (23%), improper habits (21%), failure to win (16%), poor public relations (15%), and poor classroom performance (13%).

In the 80's, America had a cultural change and winning and losing became more of a factor for coaching job security. The main reasons for dismissals were: win-loss record (32%), lack of coaching skills (31%), relationship problems (16%), and improper habits (12%). Sources of pressure that led to dismissals were given by principals as: boosters/fans (38%), parents (31%), coach themselves (14%), and administration (4%). Boys' basketball (30%), football (27%), girls' basketball (23%) and volleyball (15%) were the main sports where dismissals were most common (Lackey & Scantling, 2005).

The 90's brought on a major shift in sports popularity when Title IX improved girls' accessibility to sports. Girl's volleyball (20%) and girls' basketball (19%) were the main sports for dismissals followed by boys' basketball (17%) and football (17%). Sources of pressure changed as well with parents (41%), fans (26%), and the coach themselves (22%). Reason for dismissals were poor coach – athlete relationships (19%), failure to motivate (16%), poor public relations (14%), improper conduct (13%), win-loss record (9.5%) (Lackey & Scantling, 2005).

In the 2000's study, many of the same reasons were given for each area. Principals listed reasons for dismissal as: (1) coach – player relationship, (2) lack of coaching skill, (3) improper conduct, and (4) failure to win. The leading sources of pressure were: parents, boosters, coaches themselves, school board, and athletes. The main sports for coaching dismissals were: girls' basketball (27%), boys' basketball (23%), football (18%), and girls' volleyball (15%). The comparable results over the four decades' add great knowledge for coaches to identify with to prepare for this profession (Lackey & Scantling, 2005).

Although Lackey and Scantling (2005) have contributed greatly to this area, their research lacks head coaches thoughts about reason for dismissals. Miller, Lutz, Shim, Fredenburg, and Miller (2005) added coach's thoughts to this study and compared them to principals. These authors focused on all public high school head coaches and principals from Texas. The questionnaire was modified from Lackey's original format slightly. Since sports specialization at the high school level and the opportunity for college scholarships has become more intense, pressure on coaches has increased. Proper communication between coaches and the administration to identify those sources and agree on them has become more important.

In Texas, pressure to win is extremely high. Coaches and principals agreed that failure to win (47%) was the main reason for dismissals followed by poor public relations (13.2%), administration problems (8.8%), coach-athlete relationship (5.2%), and misconduct (4.9%). Sources of pressure identified by both were a little different. Coaches rated themselves (43%) first followed by parents (18%), winning (16.8%), and administration (4.1%). Principals rated fans/community (49.7%) first, followed by parents (26.4%), boosters (11.3%), and coaches themselves (5.8%). The main sports were: football (31%), girls' basketball (11.1%), boys' basketball (10.6%), and volleyball (5.2%). The authors also identified school classification reason for dismissals with 5A schools firing more coaches for win-loss records; 3A schools leading in coach – athlete relationships, poor teaching, and failed duties; 2A schools leading in misconduct; and 4A schools leading in poor discipline (Miller et al., 2005).

Miller, Lutz, Shim, Fredenburg, and Miller (2006) furthered their next study by including athletic directors. The athletic directors were given the same survey as the

principals with a few modifications. When compared to other studies, poor management and communication (36%) have replaced failure to win as the main reason for dismissal. Improper conduct (14%) and poor public relations (13%) were also listed as reasons for dismissals. The sports with the most dismissals were: football (17.5%), boys' basketball (12.8%), girls' basketball (12.8%), and volleyball (7.6%). The athletic directors also identified sports that were the most difficult to find replacement coaches. The results were: cheerleading (13.5%), volleyball (10.1%), girls' soccer (9.4%), and wrestling (7.8%).

The data from these studies showed that girls' sports are a consistently tough aspect of this profession. The expansion of girls' athletics has added pressure on school administrators to hire more qualified coaches (Lackey, 1986). Also, parents seem to be a consistent source of pressure that adds to coaching dismissals. Parents are not qualified to evaluate a coach because of the personal involvement with players as their children. Unfortunately, parents play a huge role in the dismissal process, especially in small, tight-knit communities (Lackey & Scantling, 2005). Obviously, a coach's success producing a competitive team is a main reason for job security. Coach's knowledge of all the other aspects of their job, that are evaluated by the administration and seen as important duties, need to improve for coaches to reduce the chances of getting dismissed.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

This was a descriptive, causal comparative study dealing with pressures perceived by principals and high school head coaches. This chapter describes the subjects, treatment protocol, data collection, instrumentation, and analysis of data.

Subjects

Subjects selected for the study include 234 principals, 233 head football coaches, 207 head baseball coaches, 197 head softball coaches, and 391 head basketball coaches currently employed in Mississippi high schools. The surveys were sent to head coaches and principals in every public high school in the state of Mississippi. Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board (See Appendix C).

Treatment Protocol

Data collected represent the target population. The collected data was analyzed to determine sources of pressure and reasons for dismissals among high school head coaches in Mississippi as perceived by principals and head coaches. The raw data was destroyed upon completion of the analysis of the study.

Data Collection

Current head football, head baseball, head softball, and head girls/boys basketball coaches and principals at each high school in Mississippi were determined through phone calls made personally by the researcher to each school. The survey was distributed through a mail out in September 2007 to each head coach and principal. Addresses for

each school were obtained through The University of Southern Mississippi football recruiting office. A cover letter was attached to the survey to explain the nature of the study (See Appendix D). The survey took approximately 5 – 10 minutes to complete. Each survey was coded so the author knew who had returned the survey in case a follow up packet needed to be sent to the individuals. The follow up plan was not used because of a 42% return rate on the first attempt of distribution.

Instrumentation

The instrument selected for this study was a coaching questionnaire developed by Dr. Donald Lackey. Permission to modify the instrument was given by Dr. Lackey via email (See Appendix E). Modifications included making the instrument suitable for Mississippi classifications and rating pressure on coach's classroom performance. The 18 – item questionnaire was composed of questions rating sources of pressure and reasons why coaches were dismissed from their jobs. It also deals with which sports contain the most dismissals and identifies classifications of schools.

Content and face validity of the survey was determined by identifying six experts in the area of pressure on coaches and having them take the survey. After completing the survey, a validity questionnaire (See Appendix F) was given to each specialist to offer suggestions for improvement. The specialists were two head high school football coaches, two high school principals, one head college coach, and one college professor. The questions on the validity questionnaire included: Does the survey contain understood language? Does it deal with appropriate issues? Was there anything offensive? Is there any question that needs to be excluded? Does any question need to be added? The survey questions and language were all deemed suitable by the experts.

Reliability was determined by giving the survey to five individuals: two head coaches and three principals. Each individual was contacted and asked to participate and the survey was given to them personally. The purpose was to determine if there were any potential problems with the structure of the survey. No problems were identified by the respondents. The internal consistency for the entire instrument was .78.

Analysis of Data

The study's three hypotheses were analyzed through the use of MANOVA since there are multiple dependant measures for each hypothesis. An alpha level of .05 was used for statistical significance ($p \leq .05$). Data was analyzed using the SPSS program.

CHAPTER IV

Results

Demographic Information

The survey was distributed to principals and head coaches in football, baseball, softball, and basketball at all Mississippi public high schools. Two hundred and thirty four principals, 233 football, 207 baseball, 197 softball, and 391 basketball head coaches were surveyed. Five hundred and twenty seven total surveys were returned out of 1,262. This is 42% overall return rate.

Table 1 illustrates the overall return rate for principals and head coaches surveyed. Principals had the highest return rate with 53%. Football (40%), baseball (43%), and softball (43%) head coaches were evenly represented. Basketball coaches yielded the lowest return rate of 35%.

Table 1**Return Rate on Surveyed Subjects**

Subject	# Sent	# Returned	Return Percentage
Principal	234	124	53%
Basketball Coach	391	135	35%
Football Coach	233	94	40%
Baseball Coach	207	90	43%
Softball Coach	197	84	43%
Total	1262	527	42%

Table 2 is a frequency table of the number of principals and coaches that returned the surveys based on school classification. The principal's responses were evenly distributed throughout each classification. Coach's responses were represented higher in 4A and 3A classifications.

Table 2**Frequency of Respondents by School Classification**

Class	Frequency	Percent
<u>Principal</u>		
1A	21	16.9%
2A	28	22.6%
3A	28	22.6%
4A	27	21.8%
5A	20	16.1%
Total	124	100%
<u>Coach</u>		
1A	55	13.6%
2A	71	17.6%
3A	93	23.1%
4A	124	30.8%
5A	60	14.9%
Total	403	100%

Table 3 describes the principal's survey question: Were you ever an interscholastic coach? Seventy five percent of returned surveys answered yes. One principal did not answer the question.

Table 3**Frequency of Principals as Interscholastic Coaches**

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	93	75%
No	30	24%
Missing	1	1%
Total	124	100%

Table 4 describes the coach's survey question: You are the head coach of what sport? Football (23.3%) and baseball (22.3%) were the highest represented while girl's basketball coaches was the lowest (15.9%).

Table 4**Frequency of Coaches in Certain Sports**

Sport	Frequency	Percent
Football	94	23.3%
Baseball	90	22.3%
Softball	84	20.8%
Boy Basketball	71	17.6%
Girl Basketball	64	15.9%

Table 5 describes the question: Have one or more coaches been dismissed or forced to resign at your school during the past four years? The coaches (64%) answered yes at a higher percentage than the principals (53.2%).

Table 5**Frequency of Comparison of Dismissal from Principals and Coaches**

	Principal		Coach	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Yes	66	53.2%	258	64%
No	58	46.8%	142	36%

Table 6 describes the question: Which sports have dismissals occurred? Football and baseball had the most dismissal as stated by both principals and head coaches. Girls' and boys' basketball ranked third and fourth in dismissals when comparing the data from principals and head coaches. The fact that football, baseball, and basketball were the main sports with dismissals was not surprising.

Table 6**Frequency of Dismissals of Head Coaches from Surveyed Sports**

Sport	Principal	%	Sport	Coach	%
Football	36	29.0	Football	157	39.0
Baseball	20	16.1	Baseball	81	20.1
Girl Basketball	19	15.3	Boy Basketball	78	19.4

Table 6 (continued)

Sport	Principal	%		Coach	%
Boy Basketball	14	11.3	Girl Basketball	67	16.6
Softball	13	10.5	Softball	42	10.4
Volleyball	2	1.6	Boy Track	16	4.0
Girl Soccer	2	1.6	Girl Soccer	11	2.7
Swimming	2	1.6	Girl Track	11	2.7
Boy Track	2	1.6	Boy Soccer	10	2.5
Boy Soccer	2	1.6	Boy Golf	4	1.0
Girl Track	2	1.6	Boy Tennis	4	1.0
Other	2	1.6	Volleyball	3	0.7
Girl Golf	0	0.0	Girl Golf	2	0.5
Girl Tennis	0	0.0	Girl Tennis	2	0.5
Boy Golf	0	0.0	Other	2	0.5
Boy Tennis	0	0.0	Swimming	1	0.2

Table 7 describes the question: What is the main reason for coaching dismissals?

Failure to win was the highest response by coaches followed by coach / administration relationship and improper conduct. Improper conduct was the highest response by principals followed by failure to motivate, and player / coach relationship.

When comparing the reason for dismissal, it is interesting where each reason ranked. Coaches ranked failure to win as their number one reason for dismissal while principals ranked failure to win seventh. Perhaps there is a lack of communication for reasons of dismissals causing a difference in perceptions among the two groups. Improper conduct is always a reason for dismissing coaches so ranking it in the top three for both subjects showed agreement between the two groups.

Table 7

Frequency of Reasons for Dismissals

Reason	Principal	%		Coach	%
Improper Conduct	23	18.5	Fail to Win	118	29.3
Fail to Motivate	21	16.9	Coach / Adm Rel	94	23.3
Player / Coach Rel	20	16.1	Improper Conduct	90	22.3

Table 7 (continued)

Reason	Principal	%		Coach	%
Coach / Adm Rel	19	15.3	Lack Coach Skill	74	18.9
Lack Coach Skill	18	14.5	Player / Coach Rel	74	18.9
Public Relations	17	13.7	Public Relations	55	13.6
Fail to Win	17	13.7	Fail to Motivate	49	12.2
Teaching Performance	13	10.5	Other	49	12.2
Other	8	6.5	Teaching Perform	47	11.7

Testing the Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1 stated that there will be no significant difference between rating of sources of pressure with high school coaches and principals. MANOVA showed $F(12,513) = 4.35, p < .001$ so the hypothesis was rejected. Principals had a higher mean in questions 3, 10, and 12. Coaches had a higher mean in question 8.

Table 8**Significantly Different Questions of Hypothesis 1**

Question	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>P Value</i>
3 (Individual Sports)	11.28	1/524	p = .001
8 (Administration)	6.98	1/524	p = .008
10 (Family)	7.82	1/524	p = .005
12 (Media)	9.91	1/524	p = .002

Table 9 is a summary of questions 2 – 13 dealing with perceived sources of pressure for hypothesis 1. Question 9 (Him / Her Self) was the highest rated source of pressure from both principals and head coaches. Question 10 (Family) was rated as the lowest source of pressure by the coaches. Question 7 (Athletes) was rated as the lowest source of pressure by principals. It is interesting that the top 5 perceived sources of pressure are the same with principals and head coaches.

Table 9**Mean of Responses to Questions on Sources of Pressure**

Principal			Coach		
Question #	Mean	Std. Dev.	Question #	Mean	Std. Dev.
9 (Him / Her Self)	3.75	.54	9 (Him/Her Self)	3.80	.49
4 (Parents)	3.52	.58	4 (Parents)	3.46	.64
2 (Team Sports)	3.41	.65	2 (Team Sports)	3.37	.63
6 (Fans)	3.23	.80	11 (Teaching)	3.12	.72
11 (Teaching)	3.12	.73	6 (Fans)	3.10	.82
12 (Media)	2.81	.84	8 (Administration)	2.80	.73
3 (Individual Sport)	2.74	.84	7 (Athletes)	2.65	.81
10 (Family)	2.61	.81	5 (School Board)	2.63	.75
5 (School Board)	2.60	.77	12 (Media)	2.53	.86
8 (Administration)	2.60	.70	3 (Individual Sport)	2.45	.82
7 (Athletes)	2.52	.74	10 (Family)	2.35	.95
13 (Other)	1.77	1.77	13 (Other)	1.61	1.02

Scale: 1 = none, 4 = great

Table 10 is a breakdown of principal's ratings of sources of pressure for hypothesis 1. Principals rated question 9 the highest with 80%.

Table 10**Breakdown of the Principal Rating of Sources of Pressure**

Question #	None (%)	Little (%)	Mod (%)	Great (%)
2 (Team Sport)	1(1)	8 (6)	53 (43)	62 (50)
3 (Individual Sport)	10(8)	34(27)	58 (47)	22 (18)
4 (Parents)	1 (1)	2 (2)	52 (42)	69 (56)
5 (School Board)	7(6)	51(41)	51 (41)	15 (12)
6 (Fans)	1 (1)	25(20)	42 (34)	56 (45)
7 (Athletes)	8 (6)	54(44)	52 (42)	10 (8)
8 (Administration)	6(5)	46(37)	63 (51)	9 (7)
9 (Him / Her Self)	0	6 (5)	19 (15)	99 (80)
10 (Family)	11(9)	41(33)	57 (46)	15 (12)
11 (Teaching)	2(2)	20(16)	63 (51)	39 (31)
12 (Media)	7(5)	37(30)	53 (43)	27 (22)
13 (Other)	80(64)	12(10)	12 (10)	20 (16)

Table 11 is the head coach's ratings of sources of pressure for hypothesis 1.

Table 11

Breakdown of the Coaches Rating of Sources of Pressure

Question #	None (%)	Little (%)	Mod (%)	Great (%)
2 (Team Sport)	1 (.3)	29 (7)	193 (48)	180 (44.7)
3 (Individual Sport)	40 (10)	182 (45)	137 (34)	44 (11)
4 (Parents)	2 (1)	27 (7)	157 (39)	217 (53)
5 (School Board)	23 (6)	145 (36)	191 (47)	44 (11)
6 (Fans)	8 (2)	91 (22)	156 (39)	148 (37)
7 (Athletes)	30 (7)	139 (35)	177 (44)	57 (14)
8 (Administration)	12 (3)	119 (30)	209 (52)	63 (15)
9 (Him / Her Self)	2 (1)	10 (3)	54 (13)	337 (84)
10 (Family)	79 (20)	161 (40)	106 (26)	57 (14)
11 (Teaching)	4 (1)	71 (17)	201 (50)	127 (32)
12 (Media)	41 (10)	164 (41)	141 (35)	57 (14)
13 (Other)	280 (70)	37 (9)	48 (12)	37 (9)

Hypothesis 2 states there will be no significant difference between rating sources of pressure of high school coaches between male and female sports. MANOVA showed $F(12,389) = 2.85, p = .001$ so the hypothesis was rejected. Coaches of female sports had a higher mean in questions 3 (Individual Sport) and 4 (Parents).

Table 12

Significantly Different Questions of Hypothesis 2

Question	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>P Value</i>
3 (Individual Sports)	16.79	1/400	$p < .001$
4 (Parents)	4.41	1/400	$p = .036$

Table 13 describes the head coach's perceptions of sources of pressure for hypothesis 2. This is broken down by coaches of male and female sports. Question 9 (Him / Her Self) was rated highest in both categories. It is interesting to note that the top six means were the same for both coaches of male and female sports.

Table 13**Mean of Coaches of Male and Female Sports on Sources of Pressure**

Male			Female		
Question #	Mean	Std. Dev.	Question #	Mean	Std. Dev.
9 (Him / Her Self)	3.80	.50	9 (Him / Her Self)	3.82	.47
4 (Parents)	3.41	.63	4 (Parents)	3.55	.65
2 (Team Sport)	3.35	.62	2 (Team Sport)	3.40	.64
6 (Fans)	3.13	.81	11 (Teaching)	3.14	.72
11 (Teaching)	3.11	.72	6 (Fans)	3.05	.83
8 (Administration)	2.80	.70	8 (Administration)	2.81	.78
5 (School Board)	2.64	.78	7 (Athletes)	2.73	.80
7 (Athletes)	2.60	.82	3 (Individual Sport)	2.67	.78
12 (Media)	2.54	.85	5 (School Board)	2.63	.70
3 (Individual Sport)	2.33	.81	12 (Media)	2.52	.88
10 (Family)	2.28	.93	10 (Family)	2.46	.97
13 (Other)	1.66	1.02	13 (Other)	1.52	1.00

Scale: 1 = none. 4 = great

Hypothesis 3 states there will be no significant difference between rating sources of pressure of high school coaches by years of experience among coaches. MANOVA showed $F(48,1552) = 1.29, p = .09$ so the null was accepted.

CHAPTER V

Discussion

This chapter discusses the findings of the study and provides recommendations for further study. The findings of this study will be compared to earlier studies discussed in the review of literature. The recommendations suggest how similar studies could be conducted to improve coaching effectiveness, communication between principals and coaches, and experiences of athletes.

Summary

H1 There will be no significant difference between rating sources of pressure between high school coaches and principals.

Analysis of the responses using a MANOVA found significant differences in the rating of perceived sources of pressure by principals and high school head coaches. Individual sports, administration, family, and the media were all significantly different.

Principals rated individual sports higher than coaches as a perceived source of pressure. Team sports seem to have more prominence and are more visible in most high schools than individual sports. Principals might assume that parents of individual sports are more involved than parents of team sports. Also, the sport requires more individual attention which could lead to more pressure. Coaches could view the fact that more attention is drawn to team sports as the reason they ranked individual sports lower than principals. Financial support from team sports to all sports in a high school could lead coaches to rank team sports as a higher source of pressure. This would show similarities to Long, Thibault, and Wolfe (2004) study on competing for finances.

Coaches rated the administration higher than principals as a perceived source of pressure. Coaches view principals as their boss, which adds automatic pressure to a job. Administrators would not be likely to identify themselves as a source of pressure. They would probably like to view themselves as a source of support. Seems this view – administration as a source of pressure – would have the potential for creating tension in the workplace. Communication needs to improve between the coach and administration to lessen the perceived source of pressure. Henry (1975) and Billick (2001) both agreed that communication is the key to a successful program.

Principals rated a coach's family higher than coaches as a perceived source of pressure. Sometimes a coach has tunnel vision during the season and does not see the effect their job has on their family. A principal, on the outside looking in, can see the negative effects that time away from their family has on a coach. Also, a principal knows the financial supplement given for the time spent away from a coach's family. This knowledge can lead a principal to believe family pressure is greater on the coach than the coach perceives. If the principals were former coaches, they could be reflecting on the time away from their family. In the coach's defense, they are the individuals living with their family so they could have more insight on the amount of support they receive from family members. This information agrees with Booth, Johnston, White, and Edwards (1984) concerning time spent away from family increasing the chances of divorce. It also agrees with Korobov (1994) dealing with time away from family leading to loneliness of the coach's spouse.

Principals rated the media higher than coaches as a perceived source of pressure. Principals are concerned with public relations and a coach representing the school in a positive way. A positive overall image of the school is a principal's goal as an administrator. Each time a coach comes in contact with the media provides a chance for public opinion of the school. Sometimes a coach is approached at a bad time by the media and does not consider the overall impact of their comments and the way they handle the exposure.

One point of interest concerning this study was the "other" category concerning perceived sources of pressure. Several sources listed frequently were: boosters, students, and injuries to players. Having knowledge of case law dealing with injuries like *Tarleo v Crabtree* and *Leahy v Hernando County School District* could ease this source of pressure. Fellow coaches were a source most listed by both principals and head coaches. In the coaching profession, it is important to be known as a coach that does things right. Whether it is playing within the rules, teaching the techniques of the game, producing a competitive team, or being a positive role model for the game, coaches want the respect of their peers for the job they do.

H2 There will be no significant difference between rating sources of pressure of high school coaches between male and female sports.

Analysis of the responses using a MANOVA test found significant differences in perceived sources of pressure between coaches of male and female sports. Two areas of pressure were significantly different: individual sports and parents.

Perceived pressure from individual sports was rated higher by coaches of female sports than coaches of male sports. The individual sports on the survey were golf, track, tennis, and swimming. It is likely that females might engage in only these sports as opposed to males who may be more likely to participate in team sports and use these individual sports as just a “hobby”. Also the opportunity for advancement to collegiate sports with scholarships could be taken more serious with females in these individual sports.

Coaches of female sports rated parents higher as a perceived source of pressure than coaches of male sports. The researcher believes it is possible that female athletes take things more personally and cause more inner team conflict than male athletes so coaches have to be sensitive in the way they handle each athlete. Parents could view the coach’s ability to handle these type situations negatively and create pressure for the coach. Also, the surveyed subjects of female sports could have been female coaches which could be more sensitive to parent scrutiny. Unfortunately the researcher did not include gender in this survey.

H3 There will be no significant difference between rating sources of pressure of high school coaches by years of experience between coaches.

Analysis of the responses using a MANOVA found no significant difference in perceived sources of pressure by years of experience. This lack of statistical significance signaled that sources of pressure on head coaches do not change with years of experience. Each new school year brings new athletic seasons. No matter how the previous year finished, the upcoming year starts all over with the same potential for success.

Other Findings

Analyses of reasons for dismissals of high school head coaches using a MANOVA revealed that principals and coaches differed in their responses in several situations. Principals stated that improper conduct was the main reason for dismissing coaches, followed by failure to motivate players, and the coach / player relationship. Coaches stated that failure to win was the main reason for dismissals, followed by coach / administrator relationship, and improper conduct. Both principals and coaches ranked teaching performance as the least likely reason for dismissing a coach. "Other" reasons were coach's work ethic, problems with the school board, discipline of players, and non – renewal of teaching certifications.

Failure to win is number one on the coaches' ranking and number six on principals' ranking. Coaches perceive "failure to win" as the main reason for dismissal possibly because of the nature of the business. Advancement in the coaching profession is more likely to occur if a coach has created a successful winning program. The win/loss factor is a form of great personal pressure by a coach in addition to the pressure from the school, parents, and community. For the majority of coaches, winning/losing can determine their value for the way they do their job, so the pressure is high to succeed.

Principals rated failing to win as the sixth reason for dismissals. Other reasons for dismissals identified by principals, failure to motivate and coach/player relationship, may contribute to failure to winning. Principals may use other reasons for dismissing a coach but the coach perceives the failure to win as the primary reason for being dismissed. The lack of communication is a consistent problem in this business. Applying Hoch (1998)

reasons for improving this communication by understanding the role of coaches within a school and basing success on more than a team's record could help reduce this miscommunication.

Discussion

Since Lackey and Scantling (2005) have been the most consistent researchers in this area, comparing their results from Nebraska principals to this study is beneficial to the body of knowledge. Their research over the past four decades has laid the foundation for this study. Miller, Lutz, Shim, Fredenburg, and Miller (2005) are also contributors through their research in Texas with principals and coaches. The knowledge gained will help improve communication between principals and coaches about the sources of pressure placed on interscholastic coaches.

Table 14 is a comparison of studies from all three contributors dealing with the top four reasons for dismissals of coaches by principals. Improper conduct was the only reason that showed up in all three studies. Failure to win not being rated in the top four in the Pigott study was surprising because of the importance of athletics in Mississippi. Failing to win in the Miller, Lutz, Shim, Fredenburg, and Miller (2005) study was on track with the perception of Texas athletics.

Table 14

Top 4 Reasons for Dismissals by Principals:

<u>Lackey & Scantling (2005)</u>	<u>Miller et al. (2005)</u>	<u>Pigott (2008)</u>
1. Player / Coach Relationship	Fail to Win	Improper Conduct
2. Lack of Coaching Skill	Poor Public Relations	Failure to Motivate
3. Improper Conduct	Coach / Adm Relationship	Player / Coach Rel.
4. Fail to Win	Improper Conduct	Coach / Adm Rel

Table 15 is a comparison of studies from the two contributors to this body of knowledge dealing with the top four reasons for dismissals of coaches as rated by head coaches. Coaches from Mississippi and Texas ranked failing to win as the number reason for being dismissed. The pressure to win in these two states is high because of the perception of the coach, school, and community from success in athletics. The coach/administrator relationship needs to improve through communication of what is expected of the athletic program. This communication should improve the quality of the relationship between the two.

Table 15

Top 4 Reasons for Dismissals by Coaches:

<u>Miller et al. (2005)</u>	<u>Pigott (2008)</u>
1. Fail to Win	Fail to Win
2. Poor Public Relations	Coach / Adm Relationship
3. Coach / Adm Relationship	Improper Conduct
4. Improper Conduct	Player / Coach Relationship

Table 16 is a comparison of studies from all three contributors dealing with the top four reasons of perceived sources of pressure on head coaches rated by principals. Parents and coaches themselves were ranked in all three studies. Coaches will always place tremendous pressure on themselves for their teams to be successful. Parents will always add pressure to a coaches job because of the personal investment they have in their child.

Table 16

Top 4 Perceived Sources of Pressure by Principals:

<u>Lackey & Scantling (2005)</u>	<u>Miller et al. (2005)</u>	<u>Pigott (2008)</u>
1. Parents	Fans	Coach Themselves
2. Boosters	Parents	Parents

Table 16 (continued)

<u>Lackey & Scantling (2005)</u>	<u>Miller et al. (2005)</u>	<u>Pigott (2008)</u>
3. Coach Themselves	Boosters	Team Sports
4. School Board	Coach Themselves	Community

Table 17 is a comparison of studies from both contributors dealing with the top four reasons of perceived sources of pressure on head coaches rated by coaches. The ranking of the coach themselves and parents were the top two in each study was not surprising. Coaches place so much pressure on themselves for the overall success of their program. Parents are a major source because of their investment in their child and money they put into the program. Coaches ranked teaching responsibility as a higher source of pressure than principals. This ranking was surprising because of the importance of academics at the high school level.

Table 17**Top 4 Perceived Sources of Pressure by Coaches:**

<u>Miller et al. (2005)</u>	<u>Pigott (2008)</u>
1. Coach Themselves	Coach Themselves
2. Parents	Parents
3. Fail to Win	Team Sports
4. Administration	Teaching Responsibility

Table 18 is a ranking of the top four sports where dismissals took place in the three studies. The major sports at the high school level, football and basketball, were listed in all three studies. Football being ranked at the top in Texas and Mississippi was expected by the author because of the status within the schools, visibility within communities, and fan base throughout the state.

Table 18

Top 4 Dismissals of Coaches by Sport:

<u>Lackey & Scantling (2005)</u>	<u>Miller et al. (2005)</u>	<u>Pigott (2008)</u>
1. Girls Basketball	Football	Football
2. Boys Basketball	Girls Basketball	Baseball
3. Football	Boys Basketball	Boys Basketball
4. Girls Volleyball	Volleyball	Girls Basketball

Three country music stars, Tracy Lawrence, Kenny Chesney, and Tim McGraw, just released a song titled: “Find Out Who Your Friends Are”. The second verse of that song goes like this, “Everybody wants to slap your back wants to shake your hand when you’re up on top of that mountain. Let one of those rocks give way then you slide back down look up and see who’s around then.” This verse describes the lifestyle in the coaching world. When a coach is on top of their profession because of winning, competitiveness of their team, and productivity in other areas, the school, community, fans, students, and all others invested are praising the coach’s efforts and capabilities. Everyone wants to support and be a part of a successful program. As soon as the coach and team struggle and possibly not meet the preseason expectations, those same people are calling for the coach’s job.

Recommendations

This study should be replicated each decade in the state of Mississippi. It would also benefit the coaching profession to administer this in other states. This will show if the sources of pressure and reasons for dismissals are changing with the times. It will also provide more information for better communication with principals and head coaches. This would also establish stability, reliability, and validity of the conclusions drawn from this study.

Further studies could compare assistant coach's sources of pressures with head coaches. This information could help reveal the many roles and responsibilities of assistant coaches. It could also show if there are similar sources of pressure between the two positions. Finally, this could help provide information to assistant coaches to see if they are truly prepared to be a head coach.

Comparing the divorce rate of head high school coaches in Mississippi with Matejkovic (1983) study could help provide more knowledge on family harmony within the coaching profession. Society and the magnification of sports have changed since 1983 so the information gained could be valuable to college students looking at entering the coaching profession and having a family.

Studying coping strategies of high school coaches dealing with stress would also benefit the profession since Gilbert (2004) only found four studies over a thirty year period. It could provide a comparison to Frey (2007) study with college coaches coping methods. Adding "other coaches" as a perceived source of pressure and gender of the coach/principal to the current survey would be worth investigating.

Surveying coaches who have left the profession about the stressors that caused them to leave would provide knowledge for maintaining professionals in the school system. Comparing those coaches with current coaches in the profession about the stressors could help identify employees who were experiencing burnout.

APPENDIX A

PRINCIPAL QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Classification of your school: 1A ____ 2A ____ 3A ____ 4A ____ 5A ____

As you view the overall climate of the coaching dynamic in your school, please rate, by **placing a check** by the amount of pressure you feel is on **head coaches** in these areas.

2. Rate the amount of pressure you feel is exerted on coaches of team sports.

Great ____ **Moderate** ____ **Little** ____ **None** ____

3. Rate the amount of pressure for coaches of individual sports.

Great ____ **Moderate** ____ **Little** ____ **None** ____

4. Rate the pressure on coaches from parents of athletes.

Great ____ **Moderate** ____ **Little** ____ **None** ____

5. Rate the pressure on coaches from the School Board.

Great ____ **Moderate** ____ **Little** ____ **None** ____

6. Rate the pressure on coaches from fans of the sport other than parents.

Great ____ **Moderate** ____ **Little** ____ **None** ____

7. Rate the pressure on coaches from athletes on the team.

Great ____ **Moderate** ____ **Little** ____ **None** ____

8. Rate the pressure on coaches from administration of the school.

Great ____ **Moderate** ____ **Little** ____ **None** ____

9. Rate the pressure on coaches from the coach him / herself.

Great ____ **Moderate** ____ **Little** ____ **None** ____

10. Rate the pressure on coaches from their family.

Great ____ **Moderate** ____ **Little** ____ **None** ____

11. Rate the pressure on coaches for their teaching performance.
Great _____ **Moderate** _____ **Little** _____ **None** _____
12. Rate the pressure on coaches from the media (radio, TV, internet, newspaper).
Great _____ **Moderate** _____ **Little** _____ **None** _____
13. Rate the pressure on coaches from any other source. (Name it: _____)
Great _____ **Moderate** _____ **Little** _____ **None** _____
14. Have one or more coaches been dismissed or forced to resign at your school during the **past four years**? **Yes** _____ **No** _____ (If answer is **NO**, please go to question 18 and continue the survey.)
15. If answer to question 14 is **YES**, please indicate from which sport (s) dismissals occurred:
- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| Volleyball _____ | Football _____ |
| Girls Basketball _____ | Boys Basketball _____ |
| Softball _____ | Baseball _____ |
| Girls Golf _____ | Boys Golf _____ |
| Girls Track _____ | Boys Track _____ |
| Girls Tennis _____ | Boys Tennis _____ |
| Girls Soccer _____ | Boys Soccer _____ |
| Swimming _____ | Other (Identify) _____ |
16. What was the total number of coaching dismissals over the **past 4 years**? _____
17. In your opinion why were the coaches dismissed? **Check the main reason** for each coach. If more than one coach was dismissed for the same reason, place two or more checks on the line.
- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Failure to win _____ | Public relations _____ |
| Lack of Coaching Skill _____ | Failure to motivate players _____ |
| Player / coach relationships _____ | Improper conduct of the coach _____ |
| Teaching performance _____ | Other (Name) _____ |
| Coach / administrator relationships _____ | |
18. Were you ever an interscholastic coach? **Yes or No**
19. How many years have you been the principal of this school? _____

Thank you for your time.

COACHING QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Classification of your school: 1A ____ 2A ____ 3A ____ 4A ____ 5A ____

As you view the overall climate of the coaching dynamic in your school, please rate, **by placing a check**, the amount of pressure you feel is on **head coaches** in these areas.

2. Rate the amount of pressure you feel is exerted on coaches of team sports.

Great ____ **Moderate** ____ **Little** ____ **None** ____

3. Rate the amount of pressure for coaches of individual sports.

Great ____ **Moderate** ____ **Little** ____ **None** ____

4. Rate the pressure on coaches from parents of athletes.

Great ____ **Moderate** ____ **Little** ____ **None** ____

5. Rate the pressure on coaches from the School Board.

Great ____ **Moderate** ____ **Little** ____ **None** ____

6. Rate the pressure on coaches from fans of the sport other than parents.

Great ____ **Moderate** ____ **Little** ____ **None** ____

7. Rate the pressure on coaches from athletes on the team.

Great ____ **Moderate** ____ **Little** ____ **None** ____

8. Rate the pressure on coaches from administration of the school.

Great ____ **Moderate** ____ **Little** ____ **None** ____

9. Rate the pressure on coaches from the coach him / herself.

Great ____ **Moderate** ____ **Little** ____ **None** ____

10. Rate the pressure on coaches from their family.

Great ____ **Moderate** ____ **Little** ____ **None** ____

11. Rate the pressure on coaches for their teaching performance.
Great _____ **Moderate** _____ **Little** _____ **None** _____
12. Rate the pressure on coaches from the media (radio, TV, internet, newspaper).
Great _____ **Moderate** _____ **Little** _____ **None** _____
13. Rate the pressure on coaches from any other source. (Name it: _____)
Great _____ **Moderate** _____ **Little** _____ **None** _____
14. Have one or more coaches been dismissed or forced to resign at your school during the **past four years**? **Yes** _____ **No** _____ (If answer is **NO**, please go to question 18 and continue the survey.)
15. If answer to question 14 is **YES**, please indicate from which sport (s) dismissals occurred:
- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| Volleyball _____ | Football _____ |
| Girls Basketball _____ | Boys Basketball _____ |
| Softball _____ | Baseball _____ |
| Girls Golf _____ | Boys Golf _____ |
| Girls Track _____ | Boys Track _____ |
| Girls Tennis _____ | Boys Tennis _____ |
| Girls Soccer _____ | Boys Soccer _____ |
| Swimming _____ | Other (Identify) _____ |
16. What was the total number of coaching dismissals over the **past four years**? _____
17. In your opinion why were the coaches dismissed? **Check the main reason** for each coach. If more than one coach was dismissed for the same reason, place two or more checks on the line.
- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Failure to win _____ | Public relations _____ |
| Lack of Coaching Skill _____ | Failure to motivate players _____ |
| Player / coach relationships _____ | Improper conduct of the coach _____ |
| Teaching performance _____ | Other (Name) _____ |
| Coach / administrator relationships _____ | |
18. You are the head coach of what sport? Football _____ Baseball _____
 Softball _____ Boys Basketball _____ Girls Basketball _____
19. How many years have you been a head coach at this school? _____
20. How many years have you been coaching? _____

Thank you for your time.

APPENDIX B

Self Test

How can a teacher / coach determine if he / she is consciously or unconsciously becoming too one – sided?

1. Am I as enthusiastic in my teaching as I am in my coaching?
2. Is my attitude the same in class as it is in practice?
3. Do I plan my classes as well as I plan my practices?
4. Do I treat all students fairly and try to be as helpful as I can, or do I give preferential treatment to my athletes?
5. Are my students and classes as important to me as my athletes and teams?
6. Do I attend physical education and teacher conferences or just coaching conferences?
7. Am I a member of professional physical education associations, or only coaches associations?
8. Would I be professionally satisfied if my only responsibility was coaching? What if it was only teaching?
9. Would I change schools for a better coaching job? How about for a better teaching position?



APPENDIX C

The University of
Southern Mississippi

Institutional Review Board

118 College Drive #5147
Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001
Tel: 601.266.6820
Fax: 601.266.5509
www.usm.edu/irb

HUMAN SUBJECTS PROTECTION REVIEW COMMITTEE NOTICE OF COMMITTEE ACTION

The project has been reviewed by The University of Southern Mississippi Human Subjects Protection Review Committee in accordance with Federal Drug Administration regulations (21 CFR 26, 111), Department of Health and Human Services (45 CFR Part 46), and university guidelines to ensure adherence to the following criteria:

- The risks to subjects are minimized.
- The risks to subjects are reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits.
- The selection of subjects is equitable.
- Informed consent is adequate and appropriately documented.
- Where appropriate, the research plan makes adequate provisions for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of the subjects.
- Where appropriate, there are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of all data.
- Appropriate additional safeguards have been included to protect vulnerable subjects.
- Any unanticipated, serious, or continuing problems encountered regarding risks to subjects must be reported immediately, but not later than 10 days following the event. This should be reported to the IRB Office via the "Adverse Effect Report Form".
- If approved, the maximum period of approval is limited to twelve months.
Projects that exceed this period must submit an application for renewal or continuation.

PROTOCOL NUMBER: 27082001

PROJECT TITLE: **Sources of Pressure and Reasons For Dismissals on Mississippi High School Head Coaches**

PROPOSED PROJECT DATES: 01/20/07 to 05/10/08

PROJECT TYPE: **Dissertation or Thesis**

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS: **Keith Pigott**

COLLEGE/DIVISION: **College of Health**

DEPARTMENT: **Human Performance & Recreation**

FUNDING AGENCY: **N/A**

HSPRC COMMITTEE ACTION: **Exempt Approval**

PERIOD OF APPROVAL: **08/20/07 to 08/19/08**

Lawrence A. Hosman
Lawrence A. Hosman, Ph.D.
HSPRC Chair

8-22-07
Date

APPENDIX D

_____, 2007

Dear Principal / Head Coach:

Thank you for your time in completing this survey. The **purpose of my dissertation** is to show the reasons for dismissals and causes of pressures on head high school coaches. Hopefully, this will improve communication among head coaches and administrators on the stress and pressure of the coaching profession at the high school level.

The survey will take you **5 – 10 minutes** to complete. Your participation is completely **voluntary** and you may choose to discontinue participation at any time. Data collected will be locked in a cabinet file in my office and only myself, my chair, and my statistician will view the data. The survey is completely **confidential**. Please return the questionnaire in the self – addressed envelope provided in the packet.

Thank you once again for contributing to this body of knowledge.

Sincerely,

Keith Pigott, Doctoral Student
University of Southern Mississippi

This project has been reviewed by the Human Subjects protection Review Committee which ensures that research projects involving human subjects follow federal regulations. Any questions or concerns about rights as a research subject should be directed to the IRB Chair, University of Southern Mississippi, Box 5147, Hattiesburg, MS 39406, (601) 266 – 6820.

_____, 2007

Dear Principal / Head Coach:

Please do not discard this letter or put it aside. I am asking you, on behalf of Keith Pigott, to complete a short questionnaire about coaching pressures and dismissals at your school. Keith is our Defensive Graduate Assistant with the Southern Miss football team. The questionnaire should take you about five minutes to complete and is completely voluntary.

Keith is doing his doctoral dissertation on coaching pressures in high school and needs your help with this project. This is the first administration of this questionnaire in Mississippi. This questionnaire has been administered in Nebraska over the past four decades and has yielded response rates of 72.5 percent, 95 percent, 93 percent, and 92 percent, respectively. These are exceptionally high return rates and he hopes to replicate them.

The individual responses are confidential, results will be grouped, and school confidentiality is insured.

Keith is the first Football Graduate Assistant since I have been the Head Coach at Southern Miss to complete his Doctorate degree. I truly appreciate your response, knowing principals / head coaches face many time demands. Thanks for your participation.

Sincerely,

Jeff Bower, Head Football Coach
University of Southern Mississippi

APPENDIX E



COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
Department of Health, Physical Education,
Recreation, and Leisure Studies

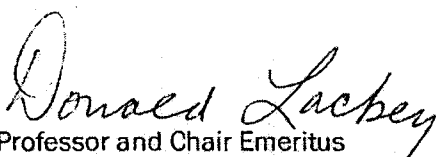
April 3, 2007

Mr. Keith Pigott
166 Serene Hills
Hattiesburg, MS 39402

PERMISSION TO USE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Keith, you have permission to use our coaching survey instrument in your assessment of coaching longevity in high schools. We have received excellent responses to the survey instrument from principals across the state of Nebraska during the four administrations of the instrument. Hopefully, administrators you correspond with will be as willing to complete the survey.

Best wishes as you proceed. I look forward to seeing the finished product.


Professor and Chair Emeritus
Department of Health, Physical Education,
Recreation and Leisure Studies

chiefs28@hotmail.com

Printed: Wednesday, June 13, 2007 8:17 AM

From : donaldlackey <dlackey@kearney.net>
Sent : Tuesday, June 12, 2007 9:50 PM
To : <chiefs28@hotmail.com>
Subject : Survey Instrument

Keith Pigott and to whom it may concern:

You have my permission to modify the survey instrument we have utilized in our coaching studies in any manner you so choose to fit your unique situation in the state of Mississippi.

Don Lackey
June 12, 2007

APPENDIX F
Pressure on Coaches Survey
Validity Questionnaire

Thank you for volunteering your time to assist me in the development of this survey. Your input is very important with respect to the survey itself and the development of my dissertation overall. Your willingness and consideration to participate in this study is greatly appreciated.

Please rate the included survey based on the following information:

1. Does the survey contain language that can be understood by head coaches and principals who have participated in this study? _____

2. Does the survey address specific and appropriate issues in the statements, as it relates to obtaining information on sources of pressure and reason for dismissing high school coaches? _____

3. Do you find any of the questions offensive or obtrusive? _____

4. Are there any questions that you would exclude from the survey? _____

5. Are there any other statements that you would include that are **not** a part of the survey? _____

6. Please make any other comments or suggestions about the survey below: _____

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